

Revelation 7

1 And after these things I saw four angels standing on the four corners of the earth, holding the four winds of the earth, that the wind should not blow on the earth, nor on the sea, nor on any tree.

This chapter acts as a parenthesis between the sixth and seventh seal. It reveals two important details:

[1] The calling of the 144,000 Jewish male evangelists who will minister on earth during the beginning of the final three and half years.

[2] We are presented with a vision of the Tribulation saints in Heaven. The four angels will temporarily hold back the storm of judgement that is coming. It is the calm before the storm. Since the angels restrain the winds which control the earth's atmospheric circulation system, the event may coincide with the holding back of rain by the two witnesses (Revelation 11:6).

Revelation 11:6 **These have power to shut heaven, that it rain not in the days of their prophecy: and have power over waters to turn them to blood, and to smite the earth with all plagues, as often as they will.**

2 And I saw another angel ascending from the east, having the seal of the living God: and he cried with a loud voice to the four angels, to whom it was given to hurt the earth and the sea,

A fifth angel appears out of the east. He had the seal of God with him. This seal (different from the seven seals on the scroll) is for the sealing of the 144,000. What the seal is isn't known, but it is likely to be spiritual rather than a literal brand. Some commentators suggest that the seal on the 144,000 will be physical, perhaps the name of Christ will be upon the foreheads. A seal such as this was

used to symbolise ownership in the ancient world (see 2 Corinthians 1:22; Ephesians 1:14; 4:30).

2 Corinthians 1:22 Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts.

Ephesians 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

This angel spoke directly to the four angels holding back the four winds. [Four corners = points of compass N.S.E.W.]

3 Saying, Hurt not the earth, neither the sea, nor the trees, till we have sealed the servants of our God in their foreheads.

The great calm will obvious cause peaceful atmospheric conditions, so that there will be no damage to the earth – the seas will be calm, and the trees will hardly flutter a leaf. The angel commanded the four angels not to release the four winds and storms until God had set His mark upon the 144,000. Notice: the antichrist will mark his followers around this time too (Revelation 13:16-18).

Revelation 13:16-18 And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name. Here is wisdom. Let him that hath understanding count the number of the beast: for it is the number of a man; and his number is Six hundred threescore and six.

The devil never has anything new, he simply counterfeits the truth – how many fall for the false! In fact, the Beast's marking system may be based upon God's mark. Those who receive either mark are sealed for all eternity. The 144,000 will be sealed upon their

foreheads for their protection. These men must have a dynamic conversion to Christ and be quickly anointed with knowledge of the truth before beginning their short ministry.

4 And I heard the number of them which were sealed: and there were sealed an hundred and forty and four thousand of all the tribes of the children of Israel.

The 144,000 come from the literal twelve tribes of Israel. It is a precise number of male Jewish converts to Christ. It is utterly foolish to spiritualise these into any kind of Gentile believer or the church. They are literal unmarried men from the literal twelve tribes of Israel. To suggest otherwise makes a mockery of God and Scripture, for when the Bible lists twelve tribes, it is always the literal twelve tribes. These represent the first of latter day Israel's restoration (Romans 11:25-26).

Romans 11:25-26 For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in. And so all Israel shall be saved: as it is written, There shall come out of Sion the Deliverer, and shall turn away ungodliness from Jacob.

This is why they are called First Fruits. God will especially use these unmarried male converts because they will not be hindered by family ties during these horrific days. They are called servants of God, for they will teach, witness and encourage others. They will be used of God to preach the Gospel in the Tribulation age, and it is likely that the martyrs of Revelation 6:9-11 are a result of their ministry.

Revelation 6:9-11 And when he had opened the fifth seal, I saw under the altar the souls of them that were slain for the word of God, and for the testimony which they held: And they cried with a loud voice, saying, How long, O Lord, holy and true, dost thou not judge and avenge our blood on them that dwell on the earth? And white robes were given unto every one of them; and it was said

unto them, that they should rest yet for a little season, until their fellowservants also and their brethren, that should be killed as they were, should be fulfilled.

5 Of the tribe of Juda were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Reuben were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Gad were sealed twelve thousand.

12,000 from Judah, 12,000 from Reuben, 12,000 from Gad.

6 Of the tribe of Aser were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Nephthalim were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Manasses were sealed twelve thousand.

12,000 from Asher, 12,000 from Nephtali, 12,000 from Manasseh.

7 Of the tribe of Simeon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Levi were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Issachar were sealed twelve thousand.

12,000 from Simeon, 12,000 from Levi, 12,000 from Issachar.

8 Of the tribe of Zabulon were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Joseph were sealed twelve thousand. Of the tribe of Benjamin were sealed twelve thousand.

12,000 from Zebulun, 12,000 from Joseph, 12,000 from Benjamin.

Note: Joseph (who stands for Ephraim) replaces the original tribe of Dan. Dan became too wicked for God to use, so He cut them off completely (Leviticus 24:11; Judges 18:1-30; 1 Kings 12:28-29).

Leviticus 24:11 And the Israelitish woman's son blasphemed the name of the LORD, and cursed. And they brought him unto Moses: (and his mother's name was Shelomith, the daughter of Dibri, of the tribe of Dan:).

Read Judges 18:1-18 in your Bible.

1 Kings 12:28-29 Whereupon the king took counsel, and made two calves of gold, and said unto them, It is too much for you to go up to Jerusalem: behold thy gods, O Israel, which brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And he set the one in Beth-el, and the other put he in Dan.

Also the name Ephraim is removed from the original list too, for similar reasons (Judges 17; Hosea 4:17).

Read Judges 17 in your Bible.

Hosea 4:17 Ephraim is joined to idols: let him alone.

That said, according to Ezekiel 48:1, the tribe of Dan will have its inheritance restored in the Millennial Kingdom.

Ezekiel 48:1 Now these are the names of the tribes. From the north end to the coast of the way of Hethlon, as one goeth to Hamath, Hazar-enan, the border of Damascus northward, to the coast of Hamath; for these are his sides east and west; a portion for Dan.

It is interesting that Levi is mentioned, for originally they were excluded from receiving an inheritance. Since Christ fulfilled all aspects of the Levitical Priesthood, their service was no longer needed. Now, at long last, they come into their inheritance. These make up the 144,000 and ONLY these!

9 After this I beheld, and, lo, a great multitude, which no man could number, of all nations, and kindreds, and people, and tongues, stood before the throne, and before the Lamb, clothed with white robes, and palms in their hands;

John's vision now focuses upon the Tribulation saints in Heaven. These will come to Christ after the Rapture of the Church, and probably through the preaching of the 144,000, and the availability of books and videos. Matthew 24:14 tells us that during the Tribulation the "Gospel of the Kingdom" will be preached around the world, which will be about salvation and the Millennial Reign of

Christ. It is wonderful to note that the number of people coming to Christ during the Tribulation years will be more than we can humanly number.

There are multitudes of people standing before the Throne of God worshipping the Lord Jesus Christ, the Lamb. These are the martyrs from the first three and half years of the Tribulation period. Their bodies are on Earth, but their spirits are in Heaven. The word “before” (*enopion*) speaks of their physical presence in front of God’s Throne. They are dressed in white robes, which are the robes of overcomers. The palm branches point to both their victory and their celebration, for they have been victorious over the Antichrist and will suffer no more.

10 And cried with a loud voice, saying, Salvation to our God which sitteth upon the throne, and unto the Lamb.

The glorified saints sing loudly before the Throne of God. Their song declares their thanks and praise for the wonderful salvation and victory received through Christ. Salvation cannot come by any other means but by faith in the finished work of Christ upon the cross, and victory over evil rests upon exactly the same foundation. Their sorrow has certainly been turned into joy (Psalm 126:5-6; Psalm 30:11).

Psalm 126:5-6 *They that sow in tears shall reap in joy. He that goeth forth and weepeth, bearing precious seed, shall doubtless come again with rejoicing, bringing his sheaves with him.*

Psalm 30:11 *Thou hast turned for me my mourning into dancing: thou hast put off my sackcloth, and girded me with gladness.*

11 And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

This majestic declaration causes the angels, elders and the four living creatures to fall down before the Lord in worship also. We

must remember that redeemed sinners have an understanding of salvation that angelic beings can never experience.

12 Saying, Amen: Blessing, and glory, and wisdom, and thanksgiving, and honour, and power, and might, be unto our God for ever and ever. Amen.

They added their heartfelt 'Amen' to the praise of the redeemed saints. This 'Amen Chorus' includes the fact that God is worthy of all blessing, honour, wisdom, thanksgiving, power, and might for ever. "Amen" is a word that means agreement, but in this case it also affirms the total truthfulness and faithfulness of Christ, for He is the "[Amen, the faithful and true witness](#)" (Revelation 3:14).

13 And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they?

One of the elders questions John about the great multitude dressed in white. Who were they? Where did they come from? It is not that he did not know, he simply wanted John to try to explain it for himself, for no doubt he was thinking the same thing.

14 And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

John did not know the answer. One of the elders explains who they are. They are the ones who have faithfully served Christ despite having to live through persecution and torment. They kept the faith and have been washed through the Blood of Christ. They came out of Great Tribulation according to the KJV, but in fact the text should read, "the Great Tribulation " or "the Tribulation the Great", so these are not preTribulation saints, but of those who turn to Christ after the Rapture of the Church. Even so, they are true

believers since they trust in the finished work of Christ on the Cross (Romans 3:24-25; 5:9).

Romans 3:24-25 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God.

Romans 5:9 Much more then, being now justified by his blood, we shall be saved from wrath through him.

15 Therefore are they before the throne of God, and serve him day and night in his temple: and he that sitteth on the throne shall dwell among them.

These Blood-bought saints, along with all the redeemed, always have direct access to God. They will serve Him day and night in the Heavenly Temple which will descend upon the New Earth. God will always be with them. This is a special promise, for God is always with the angels, but with the redeemed He has a better relationship – these were washed through the Blood of His Son.

16 They shall hunger no more, neither thirst any more; neither shall the sun light on them, nor any heat.

Never again will they suffer. This means that the tribulation of the saints will affect the vast majority of believers living at that time. Hunger and thirst will be on earth due to people accepting the Mark of the Beast (Revelation 13:15-17).

Revelation 13:15-17 And he had power to give life unto the image of the beast, that the image of the beast should both speak, and cause that as many as would not worship the image of the beast should be killed. And he causeth all, both small and great, rich and poor, free and bond, to receive a mark in their right hand, or in their foreheads: And that no man might buy or sell, save he that had the mark, or the name of the beast, or the number of his name.

17 For the Lamb which is in the midst of the throne shall feed them, and shall lead them unto living fountains of waters: and God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes.

The Lord will feed, protect, and guide them throughout eternity. According to Psalm 23 “**The LORD** is [our] **Shepherd**”, but here the Lamb is doing the shepherding. He will provide for all of His people throughout eternity (Revelation 21:6).

Revelation 21:6 **And he said unto me, It is done. I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the end. I will give unto him that is athirst of the fountain of the water of life freely.**

All of their bad memories and experiences will be forgotten forever (Revelation 21:4).

Revelation 21:4 **And God shall wipe away all tears from their eyes; and there shall be no more death, neither sorrow, nor crying, neither shall there be any more pain: for the former things are passed away.**

Whether this great multitude spend eternity on the New Earth or in Heaven itself, they will remain God’s very special people.